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ABSTRACT

The next decade will require an entirely new kind of planning and coordination for statewide systems of higher education. In the past, quantitative growth and fiscal formulas have been stressed; in the future, planning will be forced to emphasize qualitative developments and flexible governance configurations. A Center study on state planning, based on experience in California, Florida, Illinois, and New York, led to some conclusions about its strengths and weaknesses. Some strengths of statewide planning were that it: (1) controlled the expansion of new campuses; (2) served to initiate institutional planning; (3) served to justify increasing budgets; and (4) promoted institutional differentiation. Some of its shortcomings were: (1) it did eliminate unnecessary duplication of programs; (2) it failed to integrate the private with the public sector and promote large scale cooperative efforts; (3) it gave insufficient attention to issues of quality and excellence; (4) in some states, it fragmented the higher education network; and (5) with a few exceptions, it has been an ad hoc process. On the whole, statewide planning has exerted a beneficial influence on the higher education process. To face the changing needs of the 70s, strong educational leadership will be required, as well as increasingly wide participation in planning, and heavy reliance on the special competencies of a wide variety of experts. (AF)

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ACADEMIC REFORM

A Challenge for Statewide Planners

ERNEST PALOLA

What is the central imperative of university administration today? Growth. Growth is necessary to meet the demands of articulate publics, and executive and legislative bodies, for more places for the young. Growth is necessary to satisfy the demands of the many clusters of faculty for more resources and personnel. Growth is seen as absolutely necessary for strength against other colleges and universities. . . . For the administrative class in the multiversities, there is no answer other than expansion. They therefore become possessed by a logic of growth. They can wish for quality, seek quality, and of course always talk about quality; but growth is what motivates them and sets the framework for consideration of quality (Clark, 1968).

The next decade will require an entirely new kind of planning and coordination for statewide systems of higher education. As Clark suggests, growth—to accommodate burgeoning enrollments—preempts most other administrative concerns in higher education. This fact has been clearly evident in the character of statewide planning over the last 15 years. Planning has seldom examined basic issues of educational policy, but instead has focused on campus size, the number of campuses, cost of instruction, and average class size. Statewide, segmental, and institutional planning has typically been quantitative, routine, means-oriented, and concerned with logistics.

The problems for educational planners will be strikingly different during the next decade. The challenge of the 1970s will be academic reform. The educational missions and the roles of institutions will need to be completely overhauled. Present courses, curricula, and methods of instruction must be reassessed, and new programs, new curricula, and new governance configurations must be designed to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

These are the main implications of a three-year study of statewide planning for higher education undertaken by the Center at Berkeley. Earlier Center studies probed a closely related phenomenon—statewide coordination—under the direction of staff members Lyman Glenny, T. R. McConnell, Gilbert Paltridge, and Leland Medsker. At the time of their various researches, planning was a rather miniscule concern of statewide coordinators. Instead, function and program allocation, the budgeting of institutional operation, and the budgeting of capital outlay projects dominated the work of those charged with the overall shaping of higher education on a statewide basis.

The picture has changed, however, over the last half decade or so. Long-range planning is increasingly used by college and university officials and statewide coordinators as the chief means to define objectives, allocate resources, and conduct continuous assessments of performance. Given these developments—coupled with the prospects that planning would continue to gain recognition and importance in higher education—the Center elected in 1967 to seek answers to two key questions about statewide planning: *1) how is planning for higher education to be done at the state level? 2) what is the significance of statewide planning at the local institutional level?*

Four states (California, Florida, Illinois, and New York) were selected for the study due to their relatively long experience with statewide planning. Six-hundred interviews were conducted with state officials, legislators, state coordinators of higher education, and faculty and administrators of 81 public and private institutions including junior colleges, four-year colleges, and comprehensive universities.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Analyses of these four states lead us to some conclusions about the manner in which statewide planning is currently being practiced and its strengths and weaknesses.

Statewide planning has controlled the expansion of new campuses and new educational programs. In most states, coordinating agencies have established relatively elaborate procedures by which new campuses are authorized and new educational programs approved. Insuring proper geographical distribution of new campuses has been one of the central tasks of coordinating agencies. Although the initiative may still remain with the individual college or university to develop proposals for campus or program expansion, coordinating agencies have either the responsibility for deciding the feasibility of such proposals, usually assessing them in terms of the state's master educational plan, or making recommendations to the state.

Statewide planning has served to initiate and stimulate the widespread development of institutional planning. Not only has statewide planning involved many representatives from colleges and universities in the planning process at the state level, but it has often served to provide models of the essentials for sound educational planning. Usually statewide planning efforts have been designed to gather systematic data from various colleges and universities; data which the institutions often had not collected about themselves, and of which they became beneficiaries as a result of planning activities.

Statewide planning has served to extend educational opportunities and to meet new educational and social needs. Statewide planning in most states has been concerned with extending educational opportunities to new social groups heretofore excluded from college, and these new students now attending colleges and universities number in the millions. The junior college concept and the more recent upper division college concept were designed to serve new students and to meet different educational needs. In addition, colleges and universities have expanded their more traditional research and public service functions to serve new social, professional, technical, and governmental needs on a vast scale.

Statewide planning has served to justify the increasing operating and capital budgets of the higher education enterprise. Since statewide coordinating agencies usually have the power to decide on budgets for higher education, or to make recommendations to the legislature, these agencies have endeavored to bring some degree of order and standardization to the budgetary process, heretofore a highly individualistic matter. Statewide budget formulas have been developed which are designed to meet the differentiated costs per student by type of academic program and type of institution. In the process of reaching agreement on budgetary policies and formulas institutions of higher learning, the legislature, and state departments of finance have expressed their confidence in the work of coordinating agencies.

Statewide planning has made efforts to promote institutional differentiation. In California, differentiation was legislatively mandated to the segment level. However, much dissatisfaction exists over this rigid approach because segmental differentiation inhibits institutional distinctiveness. Illinois has adopted a much more flexible, nonlegal approach in its "system of systems" arrangement. Few segmental boards have tried, through planning efforts, to achieve a realistic degree of differentiation among the various campuses, and statewide and segmental planners still face this difficult task in the coming decade.

SHORTCOMINGS

The most significant shortcomings of statewide planning are the following:

Statewide planning has not been able to define and eliminate unnecessary duplication of programs, nor has it been successful in discontinuing obsolete or inadequate programs. Acceptable procedures have been developed to process and approve new program units, but no similar efforts have been made to formulate procedures for reviewing existing programs. In some states, such as Illinois and Texas, the coordinating board has the authority to review programs and to recommend their discontinuance if they are educationally or economically unjustified. However, many colleges and universities throughout the country continue to offer educational programs which unnecessarily duplicate those given in nearby institutions or are educationally obsolescent.

Statewide planning has failed to integrate the private sector with the public sector in an orderly development of higher education. Legislation has usually excluded the private sector from the direct jurisdiction of coordinating agencies, which are primarily concerned with promoting the orderly development of public higher education. An additional difficulty has stemmed from the vexing constitutional and legal questions raised under the separation of church and state doctrine. Added to this lack of inclusion in planning by coordinating agencies was the traditional disinclination of most private colleges and universities to enter into the activities of statewide planners; denominational institutions and certain highly selective and prestigious institutions participated only to the extent of supplying data about selected activities of their operations.

Statewide planning has failed to promote cooperative efforts between institutions on a large scale. Statewide planners have characteristically focused on individual institutions as the basic unit for planning purposes. State budgeting agencies have likewise focused on individual institutions. In addition colleges and universities have their long tradition of acting as relatively independent entities, thus any development of large scale financing for interinstitutional cooperation has been extremely difficult. There is no question that state budgeting policies become significant roadblocks in the path of attempts to experiment with large scale cooperative ventures. Unfortunately statewide planning has not given high priority to this type of endeavor.

Statewide planning has given insufficient direct attention to the issues of quality, excellence, and substance in higher education. Although most statewide plans contain rhetoric about quality and excellence, only a few states have gone beyond rhetoric to specify the criteria for excellence in higher education. Few attempts

have been made to specify alternative forms of quality education for different types of educational institutions and students.

Statewide planning activities have served to unify the higher education network in some states, but to fragment it in others. The unification of individual and sometimes competing institutional interests into a coherent statewide plan acceptable to the leaders of higher education, as well as to the leaders of state government, has been achieved in several states, notably New York and Illinois. In other states an effective coalition of leadership between higher education and state government has not developed, and the higher education network is fragmented.

If statewide plans are to be successful, the importance of effective leadership coalitions of the various groups in the higher education network cannot be stressed enough.

With few notable exceptions, statewide planning has been an ad hoc process. What comes under the rubric of statewide planning is *ad hoc* in nature, lacking in continuity, often conducted by consultants from outside the state, based upon little systematic research, and involving a limited number of people within the state, who are motivated by altruism and donate their services. Most planning to date has concerned itself primarily with economics and efficiency; the importance of planning at all levels in the higher education network still needs to be communicated.

On the basis of specific findings and the data assembled about educational autonomy in the four states studied, the following overall conclusion was reached:

On the whole, educational autonomy and the level of performance of colleges and universities have improved as a result of statewide planning and coordination during the period of massive expansion in higher education. Since this last point is what I judge to be the single most important conclusion of the study, a brief elaboration seems appropriate.

In the past two decades, colleges and universities, state governments, and the entire nation have worked to implement the long-cherished democratic ideal of universal higher education. The greatest expansion in the history of higher education has taken place in the United States during the past decade, and state and federal governments have increased the levels of financial support so that the vast expension could take place in an orderly fashion. The growing statewide centralization of decision-making power that has accompanied this educational affluence has meant a formal and legal loss of autonomy for colleges and universities. However, on an informal level, institutions have been able to expand and develop their educational programs in the directions that they desire. Informally, then, colleges and universities have been able to maintain or even enhance their educational autonomy.

STATE HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE CLOSE OF THE 1960s

During the 1960s—a period of mammoth and rapid expansion of higher education—statewide planning and coordinating agencies have served a vital function in helping to define and promote a more balanced and orderly pattern of growth. To the extent that higher education continues to expand during the 1970s, it is highly probable that statewide coordinating and planning agencies will not significantly lessen the educational autonomy of colleges and universities.

There are some signs, however, that in the next ten years coordinating agencies will play a much more active and directive role in the development of higher education. Most of these agencies were established by state governments between 1961 and 1968. Their major function is the development of statewide plans for the orderly growth and development of a state's system of higher education institutions. These agencies serve as the key advisor to state legislative and executive bodies about the future development of higher learning. During the 1960s, governors and legislators generally held an optimistic, expansive, higher education "can do no wrong" philosophy. But now these state officials reflect a much more conservative and critical mood about the future direction and control of higher education. A major problem is the fiscal support of higher education while the needs of other state-supported programs continue to grow. Several recently elected governors, upon entering office, ordered a ten percent cutback in the budgets of all state agencies, and assumed a perspective of scientific management for state government operations based upon that used in business and industry, with an emphasis on economy, efficiency, and a balanced budget. As a result, higher education has lost some of its former "sacred cow" status and is being treated more like any other state agency.

The recent and well-publicized activities of students and faculties on the nation's campuses have served to provide a further incentive for state governments to formulate more conservative and restrictive policies over higher education. The upsurge in student demonstrations and riots along with the demands advanced by faculty organizations have caused statewide policy-makers to take a more serious and direct look at higher education. Just at the point when many observers and educators thought of higher education as reaching new levels of success, and just when higher education was beginning to receive state and federal funds on a massive scale, new measures for control and containment are being considered.

Statewide coordinating agencies are caught in the midst of these growing crises and mounting pressures. They are faced with increased pressures by state government officials and the general public to control the expensive higher education enterprise more closely and insure its efficient and economical management. And during a period when higher education itself has been significantly politicized, important tests will be made of the capacities of coordinating agencies to exert proper controls over a massively expanded arena.

In short, higher education faces a "qualitative crisis," a crisis evidently complicated by a gap in communication. Students, faculty, legislators, and the general public are raising fundamental questions about the basic aims and

purposes of higher education. But today many planners at statewide and institutional levels are still almost wholly preoccupied with quantitative, physical, and fiscal problems. A major challenge to higher education is to devise a style of planning which will allow questions of educational policy to be openly debated and the resulting decisions facilitated, rather than inhibited, by considerations of efficiency and economy.

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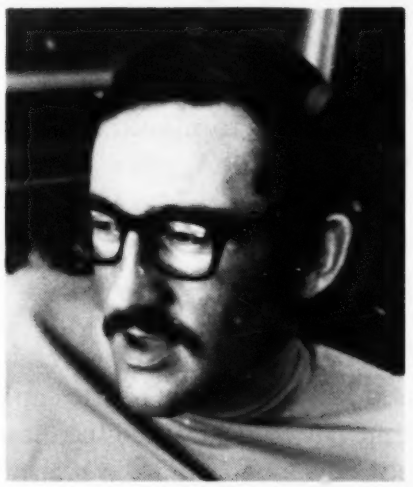

THE IMPERATIVES OF THE 1970s

We come then to our second assignment—to provide some assessment of implications of these findings for key groups of persons closely involved in the dialogue, the debate, and lastly, the decisions which so significantly shape the character of higher education in our various states. Although informed by the present research, the following discussion includes the author's judgments about needed improvements in statewide planning.

The discussion begins with a few comments about statewide planners, coordinators, and their organizational environs. The greatest challenge of the 70s, it would seem, is the necessity for a complete reassessment of the basic forms and functions of higher learning in the United States. At least two imperatives are highly visible today. The imperative to concentrate on the education of an increasingly diverse student population with equally diverse educational needs is the first. This cannot mean, as many students have tried to make clear, that academic standards, curricula, or teaching methods of the past will suffice in meeting the new educational needs. Serious rethinking and restructuring are necessary. The second imperative extends beyond the immediate task of educating students. It involves higher education's role, even obligation, in the resolution of current problems in American society. The Kerrs, Reissmans, Gardners, Heilbronners, and many others have enunciated these issues, these challenges, these crises. Many needs dominate the current scene—the need to demilitarize the national budget, the long overdue need to relieve poverty, the need to rebuild the cities, the need to control pollution, the need to eliminate racism, the need to develop more reliable methods of birth control, and even the need to tolerate the younger generation. Without further elaboration, I submit that these two imperatives demand attention to *substance* as we plan at all levels within higher education.

Four important steps for action follow from this analysis. First, a new breed of statewide planners must be developed. State planners have a vital stake as leaders in the movement toward substantive planning. Thus, their recruitment and selection is a central issue of the 70s; leaders are needed who fully understand education, who appreciate humane values, and who fully recognize higher education's potential contribution to the total welfare of society.

Second, planning must receive a much higher priority among the responsibilities assigned to statewide planning and coordinating agencies. Not only must it become the primary task of these agencies, but the significance of substantive planning for other functions must be more clearly spelled out. Plans should be used as the central guiding policy for establishing new campuses, initiating new programs and eliminating unnecessary programs, as well as developing annual operating and capital budgets.

Third, substantive planning requires the intensive participation of various experts both within and outside higher education. Only a small central staff is needed for planning since this staff would be supplemented by many experts who serve on a temporary basis to debate, discuss, and recommend alternative solutions to the vital issues of higher education.

And fourth, in order that substantive planning occur based on the counsel and experience of highly competent advisors, state officials and institutional personnel need to reassess their orientation to educational planning. Members of both the legislative and executive branches of state government must provide full support for their state planners and look upon them as the key source of advice on public policy issues concerned with higher education. If, instead, these agencies are ignored, provided only minimal support, or forced to operate within the restrictive domain of civil service policies, their effectiveness is seriously hampered. Another source of problems may arise if special study groups, commissions, or committees are created to study "hot" educational issues even though a statewide planning agency exists. These several conditions, if allowed to flourish, will generate confusion, create stalemates, and splinter the total planning effort.

Similarly, substantive planning requires the full cooperation and support of institutional personnel—faculty, administrators, students, and trustees. By fully involving these persons when they have special competencies, the quality of work by the agency should be enhanced and confidence built in its overall performance. In addition to their involvement in extra-institutional planning, local personnel can make a significant contribution toward the improvement of higher education by encouraging and participating in substantive planning for change on their own campus.*

The amount of trust that both state officials and institutional personnel have in the work of statewide planners is the single most important condition that determines whether the agency provides educational leadership. The relationship on both sides should promote partnership

* For more detail on substantive planning, see Palola, 1970.

but prevent "pawnage." The four steps for action are intended to promote trusting relationships in higher education planning.

The model for substantive planning that has been presented provides an important alternative to the current perspectives on planning and policy formulation in higher education.†

In the past, quantitative growth and fiscal formulas have been stressed; in the future, planning will be forced to emphasize qualitative development and flexible governance configurations. Strong educational leadership, increasingly wide participation in planning, and heavy reliance on the special competencies of a wide variety of experts should help achieve innovative solutions to what is the most indisputable challenge to higher education today—the certainty of change.

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